



marion municipal utilities

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



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letter from the executive director



Chuck Binkerd
Executive Director

Leading the initiatives and efforts of Marion Utilities through 2013 has been a true privilege. Over the past year, it has been my great pleasure to work alongside the Utility Service Board and a very talented and capable staff of professionals as we have faced and tackled the many issues confronting our community through the Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater utilities. As a staff, we are increasingly aware of the great responsibility entrusted to us and do not take lightly the financial burden of rate payers who provide the means by which we produce and deliver services, comply with regulatory demands, construct and maintain required (and ever aging) infrastructure, and provide employee wages and benefits. Henry Ford once said, "It is not the employer who pays the wages. Employers only handle the money... It is the customer who pays the wages." We're working hard to embrace this perspective with the desire that it might help us serve our community in the most cost effective and genuine way.

The municipal utility industry is an industry full of challenge, not unlike those of our counterparts in the private sector. Regulatory burden is ever increasing, aging facilities, failing equipment and infrastructure, economic limitations, and a great awareness of who we serve, all affect the decisions, direction, and goals of the utility.

Through change, creativity, and innovation, in concert with common sense and extensive experience, Marion Utilities' teams are meeting the challenges with the best interest of our community (our customers) in mind. Ultimately, our goals are best summed up by our Mission Statement:

"The mission of Marion Utilities is to bring added value to the city of Marion by providing excellent customer service, maintaining the highest of standards for the lowest possible cost, and promoting environmental stewardship to ensure the future of our community."

I'm proud to have had the opportunity to lead our teams through the challenges of 2013 and am looking forward to the many accomplishments awaiting in the new year as we work together to fulfill our mission on behalf of our community.

Chuck

milestone accomplishments of 2013



Restructuring Employee Health Insurance

Resulted in annual savings of approximately \$200,000.00.

Reorganization of Staffing and Organizational Structure

Reduced staffing to 63 employees, resulting in annual savings of approximately \$110,000.00.

Water Filter Design/Construction Project

Funded through Cash-on-Hand (No Bond Issue), resulting in overall savings of approximately \$850,000.00.

Wastewater Headworks/Screening Improvement Project

Extensive staff input into Value Engineering, resulting in total project savings of approximately \$1,000,000.00.

Assumed Billing Function for City Trash Services

Resulted in increased revenue to the City of Marion in the amount of approximately \$20,000.00 per month, or \$240,000.00 annually.

Creation of H2O Community Program

The Board authorized utility staff to create and promote a program designed to assist Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater utility customers with utility bill payment under prescribed circumstances. Through volunteer efforts of staff, and the generosity of the Moorehead Family Foundation, more than \$13,000.00 was raised to provide much needed assistance to many in our community through the program.





History

The Water Utility was first established in Marion in 1877 as a means of providing fire protection and potable water supply for a growing and thriving community. From that time forward, utility services have grown and evolved to meet the ever changing and demanding needs of our city. Sewers would be installed beginning in the late 1800's and were followed by the construction of the wastewater treatment plant beginning in 1938. By 1975, Marion Utilities was officially established and assumed responsibility for managing, operating, and maintaining Water and Wastewater services for the community, and the Stormwater utility was added in 1995.

MARION UTILITIES FACTS



Water Treatment Capacity

12 million Gallons per Day

Average Daily Water Production

3.5 Million Gallons per Day



Wastewater Treatment Capacity

17 million Gallons per Day

Wastewater Collection System

180 miles Underground Pipe



Stormwater System

120 Miles Underground Pipe

Water Distribution System

180 Miles Underground Pipe

3 Overhead Storage Tanks

2 Booster Pump Stations

1700 Fire Hydrants

2000 Control Valves

Average Daily Flow

7.0 million Gallons per Day

DEMOGRAPHICS



The City of Marion covers an area of approximately 16 square miles and is home to around 30,000 people.

Marion Utilities serves approximately 11,800 customers around the City.



WATER

Produces and supplies quality water for drinking, commercial, and industrial use



WASTEWATER

Cleans wastewater through physical, biological, and chemical treatment



STORMWATER

Maintains public stormwater system and develops design and construction standards

Structure

Marion Utilities is an organization comprised of three individual and independent utilities, or divisions. These divisions are Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater. Although the utilities share common administrative and managerial oversight, by state statute, each division must remain financially independent of the others. Revenues from one utility division may not be used in support of another. Operational and Capital Improvement Budgets for each division are funded independently through revenues generated by the division.

The Utility Service Board provides general purview over the operations and functions of the Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater

Utilities. The Board establishes policy, approves budgets and capital expenditures, and recommends to the City Council adequate rates to support the financial needs of the utilities. It is the responsibility of the Board to employ a competent executive who is responsible for directing the business and technical operations of the utilities.

The Assistant Director for Operations manages the day-to-day operations of the Water and Wastewater Utilities while the Assistant Director for Engineering manages the day-to-day operations of the Stormwater Utility as well as providing leadership for Engineering Services.





summary of water quality

2013 WATER QUALITY

flouride

Water additive that promotes strong teeth.

.7-1.3 mg/l

sodium

Erosion of natural deposit in ground water source.

.97 mg/l

pH levels

8.2-8.5

chlorine

Water additive used to disinfect and control microbiological organisms.

1.4-2.5 mg/l

water hardness

Hardness refers to the amount of lime or Calcium Carbonate in the water.

130 -160 mg/l

WATER QUALITY FACTS

- 💧 Marion Utilities is one of very few water utilities in Indiana that **soften our drinking water.**
- 💧 In 2013, we pumped just over **four million gallons** of drinking water per day to our customers.
- 💧 Marion's drinking water is obtained from wells in the historic **Teays River Valley**. The Teays flowed across Indiana over two million years ago. The valley was filled with glacial till as the ice sheets advanced and receded. The groundwater table is over 400 feet deep and an excellent source of water supply.



green initiatives & innovations

Marion Utilities has a commitment to energy efficiency. By investing in energy efficiency, we save energy, conserve environmental resources, and reduce our own operating costs. Among the many projects underway or completed in the last fiscal year were:

Renewable Energy

At our plant, we have digesters which use anaerobic bacteria to break down organic components associated with certain aspects of wastewater. A byproduct of the process is methane gas, which we use as fuel to operate equipment and heat buildings. In 2013 we removed our primary digester cover and repaired it, rather than replacing it.

Cost: \$465,406.76

Benefits: By repairing the lid instead of replacing it, we saved approx. \$530,000.00, on the project, and will be able to use the current lid for 25-40 more years.



Removal of the digester lid

HVAC Geo Comfort System

In 2013 an innovative heating and cooling system was installed in the Administration building. The system functions in a similar manner to a conventional geothermal system. However, rather than extracting and circulating groundwater, the system utilizes treated wastewater effluent as a means of transferring heat. Through increased energy efficiencies a seven year recovery of investment is expected.

Cost: \$300,000

Benefits: By recycling plant water to heat and cool buildings, we are saving electricity and lowering costs.



The HVAC Geo Comfort System

Load Shed Resource

We have entered in to an agreement with AEP to help reduce electric load from their system during times of heavy use or demand. When they notify us that they are experiencing high demand, we engage our generators to provide the electricity that we need to keep our operation running which removes that load from the AEP system.

Cost: No Cost

Benefits: AEP pays us \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year.



The water plant generator

community involvement



H2O Community

The Marion Municipal Utilities, in partnership with The Salvation Army are very excited about a new customer assistance program we have created called H2O Community (Help 2 Our Community). The H2O Community Program was created as a means to help our customers in the City of Marion with assistance in paying their Water, Wastewater, and/or Stormwater bills when they are experiencing financial hardships.



Educational Tours

We love giving tours of the plant process to students and groups! Our tours include a scavenger hunt and more hands-on activities to engage students from elementary to collegiate levels. In 2013, we partnered with GM to participate in the Riverwatch Monitoring program with local middle school students to help connect the wastewater treatment process to the Mississinewa River.

Community Workshops

One way we reach out to the community is by hosting educational workshops. In 2013, we hosted several. The first workshop educated community members on the proper disposal of household waste materials and what can or cannot go down the drain. For the second workshop, we partnered with the Department of Natural Resources, the **Go FishIN** program and the Marion Parks Department to provide families and individuals with an opportunity to learn to fish, as well as appreciate our water resources.



First Friday & GM's Really, Really Big Show

This year, we participated in the local First Friday's community events as well as GM's Really, Really Big Show. We used these opportunities to set up booths and share educational materials with the community.



how was money used in 2013?

Surplus revenue includes funds appropriated for ongoing capital improvement projects including federally mandated projects in excess of 30 million dollars.



Net Revenue: \$4,326,954.32

Total Expenses: \$4,375,816.31

Surplus Revenue: - \$48,861.99

Projects

Filter Rehab Project	\$1,346,007.10
6th Street Water Main Rehab	\$441,000.00
Valve Assessment	\$31,752.00
Claricone Building Concrete Work	\$11,048.04
CO2 Tank Repair	\$41,240.52
Pump Building HVAC Replacement	\$23,332.68
Windsor Drive Epoxy Lining	\$45,410.57
Time & Materials Projects	\$5,135.41



Net Revenue: \$4,454,669.04

Total Expenses: \$3,740,529.96

Surplus Revenue: \$714,139.08

Projects

Digester Lid Rehab	
Screening	
Lab Rehab	
Sewer Replacements and Extension	
Time & Materials Projects	



Net Revenue: \$1,959,206.91

Total Expenses: \$1,630,547.42

Surplus Revenue: \$328,659.49

Projects

-----\$465,406.75

-----\$480,331.09

-----\$38,230.68

ns-----\$95,569.45

-----\$19,500.00

Storm Sewer Rehab ----- \$307,096.62

Time & Materials Projects ----- \$80,129.00

2013 staff awards

Laboratory Excellence

The Marion Wastewater Laboratory was awarded the Laboratory Excellence Award, which recognizes laboratories that demonstrate a high level of commitment to good laboratory practice and accurate data reporting. This is our 4th consecutive year to win this award.

Tumble Bug Award Recipient - Pam Kirklin



The Tumble Bug Award is presented in recognition of committee members, program presenters and other journeymen within our field who have labored industriously. This Tumble Bug Award is one of the most prestigious awards presented in our industry.

Adopt-A-School Award Program

The purpose of the IWEA Adopt a School award is to recognize Indiana educators who are dedicated to educating students on the importance of protecting and improving our water environment. The 2013 recipient was Lori Babb of Marion IN, a biology teacher at McColluch Junior High School.

Chuck Binkerd Rewarded for Giving Back

Chuck Binkerd received the Ricky A Dodd Public Outreach Award. Since becoming Director, Chuck developed an Outreach & Education Committee, which focuses on planning community events and workshops, fostering relationships with schools and other community organizations, redesigning our website, and developing the H2O Community fund.

Safety Excellence

The Marion Wastewater Treatment Plant was awarded the Safety Excellence Award, which recognizes treatment plants that demonstrate a high level of commitment to good treatment practice and training. This is our 3rd consecutive year to win this award.

Employee Accomplishments

- 🌟 Marc Freeman was recognized for 25 years of service by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Weather Service.
- 🌟 Robin Lockridge passed the Class III Wastewater Certification Exam.
- 🌟 Shana Martin received certification as a Microsoft Office Specialist for both MSWord and MSAccess.
- 🌟 Dustin Rinehart passed the Backflow Inspection Certification Exam.
- 🌟 The John N. Hurty Meritorious Service Award recipients were Clifford Stanley with 25 yrs. service and Deborah McPhearson with 30 yrs service.

2014 GOALS

Health & Wellness

- Re-evaluate the health insurance plan offered to employees to reduce costs.
- Establish a wellness initiative to educate and support employees who want to live a healthier lifestyle.

Engineering Projects

- Complete design and construction of projects including various equipment upgrades, water main improvements, and Federally mandated sewer separation and improvement projects associated with the Long Term Control Plan.

Water Treatment Plant

- Completion of the filter upgrade under the budgeted amount and significantly under the projected engineering costs.
- Improve the chlorination and disinfection capacity within the distribution system.

Community Involvement Increase

- Strengthen our relationship with the community and educate the community on the services we provide.
- Encourage employees to give back to the community.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Re-evaluate the engineering plan for the facilities and long term control plan projects in order to develop a more cost effective approach.
- Determine and establish a plan for renewable energy efficiency and improve sustainable energy production use.

Customer Training Increase

- Educate customers on how we can all work together to protect our environment.
- Educate customers on water conservation and resources that may be available to those experiencing financial difficulty.



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